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ABSTRACT

Amidst the controversy surrounding the fate of the humanities in modern society, a program has evolved at Dawson College and four other English "colleges d'enseignment general et professionel" (CEGEP) that features a compulsory humanities core. The original purpose of the humanities program was to provide a broad general liberal arts education which would introduce students to philosophic, aesthetic, and social perspectives on the human condition. Courses were designed to raise concepts and issues which would broaden and develop students' interests, tastes, and critical judgment. Among the courses offered through the program were Comparative Studies of Cultures, Intimate Relations, Human Creativity, and Latin-American Issues. Departmental emphasis was placed on developing innovative teaching methods, which included: (1) group research or discussion; (2) simulation techniques integrating role playing and historical research; (3) experiential learning; (4) journal-keeping as a means of linking student concerns and interests, readings, and writing skills; and (5) critical and creative usage of audio-visual materials. Appendices provide a brief description of the humanities courses by category; an article on values confrontation; a humanities faculty questionnaire; and catalog information on alternative programs. (EJV)

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INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM & TEACHING STYLES

TOWARDS A NEW LIBERAL ARTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?

By

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Paper presented at a Conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, Université de Montréal, May 28th, 1985.

INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM & TEACHING STYLES

TOWARDS A NEW LIBERAL ARTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?

Introduction

A recent publication of the National Endowment for the Humanities (To Reclaim A Legacy, 1984) concluded that the Humanities in a pluralistic society require much more careful attention by faculty and college administrators. Some of its major conclusions suggested that in many instances Humanities teaching was pedantic, arid and left to inexperienced graduate students who were more concerned with their own departmental specialization than exposing young minds to the best ideas, writing and works of art of Western and non-Western cultures.

Unfortunately, the 'critique' was overly general and did not offer specific ways of teaching and learning which could be utilized by those attempting to set up vital and meaningful Humanities programs.

This paper will attempt to describe a program which has evolved since 1968 with the setting up of the first English CEGEP (Collège d'enseignment général et professionel) in Montreal and will offer examples of

(1) The theoretical and historical rationale behind a core program such as the Quebec CEGEP Humanities core;

(2) The varied and frequently innovative nature of the curriculum;

(3) Teaching methods which have been generally successful in fulfilling the objective of stimulating students as well as exposing them to the great ideas of the past and present;

(4) Some tentative hypotheses concerning the emergence of a 'New Liberal Arts' to fulfill the educational complexities of a changing technological society.

Amidst the contr[illegible]sy surrounding the fate of the Humanities in modern society* a program has evolved at Dawson College in Montreal and four other English CEGEPs which has served thousands of students since 1968. The CEGEPs were originally proposed in a major educational document called the 'Parent Report' which offered recommendations for the modernization and restructuring of education in Quebec. Among one of the most significant recommendations was the proposition that CEGEPs (junior colleges) should be established which would offer both 2 year university level and 3 year career technology programs.

One of the curricular features which distinguished the CEGEP from any other institution in North America was the establishment of a compulsory 'Humanities' core which all students would follow each semester for two years. The original purpose of the Humanities program was to provide a broad general 'Liberal Arts' type of education which would introduce students to the major philosophic, aesthetic and social perspectives on the human condition. Within the English CEGEPs 4 'categories' of Humanities (See categories in Appendix) courses were designed to introduce students to concepts and issues which would broaden and develop their interests, tastes, and critical judgement. Departmental emphasis was placed on developing innovative teaching methods to appeal to students from a wide variety of aptitudes, interests and backgrounds.

Some of the topics developed in the 15 years of the Humanities program at Dawson College included:

* See Chronicle of Higher Education, Dec. 1, 1982. 'No Coherence in Humanities'.

1) Comparative Studies of Culture
2) Concept of Alienation
3) Sexual Stereotypes
4) Search for Ideals & Justice
5) Philosophical Methods
6) Search for Values (see Appendix)
7) Greek Philosophy & Mythology
8) Intimate Relations
9) Art of Work with Children
10) Human Dynamics in Organization
11) Canadian Culture
12) Language & Human Behavior
13) Appropriate Technology & Farming
14) Global Models of Organization, the U.N.
15) McLuhan and The Sixties
16) Science, Technology & Future Studies
17) Alternative Educational Theories & Concepts
18) Human Creativity
19) Symbolism & Surrealism, Avant-Garde Art
20) Ancient Greek Art, Islamic Art
21) Newspapers - Myth & Reality
22) Blacks in Contemporary Society
23) Jews through the Ages
24) Latin-American Issues
25) Psychoanalytic Theory & The Folktale
26) Educational Television - Theory & Production
27) Sociobiology

In addition to specific courses offered by one instructor to 30-35 students several 'alternative' programs exist at Dawson College where the Humanities courses are integrated with other disciplines through cooperative or team teaching. Both the 'New School' 'Reflections' and the Liberal Arts Program are attempts to offer students learning experiences where they could benefit from continuous and integrated educational styles.

Though both the 'New School' and 'Reflections' are unique innovations and deserve specific detailed treatment both programs are new approaches to the college experience (See Appendix). The New School is a highly intense 'humanistic' form of education offering students a total learning experience based on principles of group learning and 'confluent education' principles (viz - George Brown U of California). 'Reflections' is a less ambitious effort which offers a series of 4 courses where students engage in a great deal of guided independent study and seminar work where classical Humanities courses are taught in conjunction with English, Philosophy and Psychology.

Though the variety of teaching styles utilized by nearly 50 faculty members would be too varied to discuss in detail it seemed that some tentative conclusions about effective teaching styles emerged from interviews and surveys with individual teachers.

1) One of the most highly praised teaching-learning activities consisted of students working together in groups on some topic to be researched or discussed. (From my own experience as well, this teaching style seems to possess significant potential for developing organizational and analytical skills, providing motivation and giving the student a feeling of accomplishment. Variations on this theme of mutual inquiry included peer-tutoring, dual presentations, learning cells (See Appendix).

2) A number of teachers used simulation techniques where role-playing and historical research were intertwined quite successfully. The advent of the micro-processor in education could make this type of 'simulation' highly effective (see 'Teaching Humanities in the Micro-Electronic Age', A. Adams, E. Jones, Open University Press, England, 1983.)

3) Experiental Learning - This type of teaching would take the form of well structured field work experiences, class presentations, conducting surveys, and engaging in educational and social institutions as aides and observers. Many students found this type of field work experience highly rewarding.

4) Journal-Keeping - As a form of linking student concerns, interests, reactions, feelings, extra reading on current issues as portrayed by the mass media, the journal seemed to possess great possibilities for developing student writing skills (See Appendix).

5) Critical and Creative Usage of Audio-Visual Material - Many instructors pointed out that A/V material must be carefully planned. Some educational benefits might include a heightened critical view of media, actual skill in utilizing electronic equipment and actual student produced assignments.

Conclusion

After researching and analysing the offerings and structure of this unique 'core program' in the Humanities it might be interesting to hypothesize whether some of the pedagogical and curricular elements described are characteristic of the emergence of a 'new type of liberal arts' for the 21st century. Surely, its general and comprehensive nature should allay fears of a 1981 Carnegie Foundation Report by Ernest Boyer, that "Unless we find better ways to educate ourselves as citizens we run the risk of drifting unwittingly into a new kind of Dark Age - a time when small cadres of specialists will control knowledge and thus control the decision making process."

Yet this paper will suggest an even more defined series of pedagogical categories for the further development and innovation of liberal arts programs.

Proposed categories might include the following:

1. Contemporary Cultural and Social Humanities
2. Experiental Humanities
3. Classical Humanities
4. The Humanities of Science & Technology (Future and Peace Studies)

The Thomas Sloan Foundation in its publication 'Towards a New Liberal Arts' has called for the acquisition of analytic mathematical skills and 'computer literacy' for students in a revised conception of the Liberal Arts. Even though the introduction of those curricular ideas might create major pedagogical and administrative difficulties it is imperative that a modern liberal arts curriculum attempts to integrate the 'two cultures' of science and Humanities which C.P. Snow wrote about nearly a generation ago.

Whether institutions of higher learning can modernize and innovate effectively will have a major bearing on the survival of the Humanities into the 21st century.

APPENDICES

1. HUMANITIES CATEGORIES

2. VALUE CONFRONTATION

3. HUMANITIES FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

4. LEARNINC CELLS

5. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

APPENDIX 1

FOUR CATEGORIES OF HUMANITIES COURSES

101 WORLD VIEWS

This category contains courses that introduce systems of thought which seek to explain the world and humanity's place within it. Courses will give students an acquaintance with major ideas and value systems of civilization. The emphasis of this category is upon the organization of ideas and experience into coherent patterns.

201 KNOWLEDGE

This category contains courses that study knowledge, how it is acquired, how it may be classified and, especially, how it is applied. The emphasis of this category is upon the analysis of human thinking.

301 CREATIVITY

This category contains courses that study creative achievements. The emphasis of the category is upon understanding and appreciating creative processes.

401 HUMAN VALUES AND SOCIAL ISSUES

This category contains courses that examine values and principles relating to the quality of human life. The emphasis of the category is upon the recognition and formulation of reasoned positions on social or ethical issues.

Appendix 2: "The Pedagogy of Value-Confrontation" has been excised due to poor copy. For a more extensive version of this paper, see ED 229 056.

Appendix 3 contained copyrighted material and is therefore not included. For the complete text of this article, see: "Colleges Are Called Failures at Teaching Humanities Courses," by Edward B. Fisk. New York Times, November 26, 1984.

Appendix 4

DAWSON COLLEGE

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

To All Humanities Faculty **Date** February 13, 1985

From Harry Wagschal, Chairman, Humanities

Subject

I would be most grateful if you would take some time and send me back an overview of your reflections and reactions to teaching in the Humanities Department. This material will be used for papers I am giving at the Learned Societies at l'Université de Montréal, the University of Ottawa, the University of Miami and for our Journée Pedagogique in May.

Areas I would be most interested in knowing of would include:

(1) Your most successful (and unsuccessful) teaching techniques

(2) Curricular areas which seem to create the most intense interest with your students

(3) Curricular areas and teaching styles which created great difficulty for a majority of students

(4) The efficacy of A.V. materials and a journal (if utilized)

(5) Teaching styles and curricular materials which you intend to use at a later date

(6) Your personal view of our curricular offerings in our department and suggestions for change - elimination or addition.

If you could send me your views on these (and any other areas which you might have considered) by February 28th, I would be deeply appreciative.

Sincerely,

Harry Wagschal

P.S. Confidentiality is assured.

/enclosure

HW:sem

Start NOW

Prof. Carol Moore

1. Learning means growing to the degree one is able. 2. Learning involves re-creating one's own person through integrating new ideas, through exploring new experiences 3. One learns from examining values in light of one's experience (not simply conforming to prevailing values, nor compulsively rejecting them.)

4. The best learning experience is a move from zero to one. (Woody Allen)

5. One can move when one is free from preconceptions, open to what is actually happening now.

Note - doing this successfully can reduce written work in File:

For "learning cell", to

a) check on and

b) deepen insights -

A. Do Reading assignment, then form questions:

B. Write

(1) Two questions inquiring about major aspects of the reading

(2) Two questions relating the Reading's content to other (course) materials

(3) One or more questions relating the content of the reading to relevant personal experiences

[Other types of questions may be added to or substituted for the above]

C. Class

Hand in 1 copy (Xerox or carbon) of your questions to instructor.

Keep 1 copy to use in "learning cell."

In each cell, student X asks his first question & student Y responds.

X listens to & responds to Y's reactions & to his own question.

Then Y asks his first question & X responds ...

and so on till end of session.

(While students interact, teacher will notate, listening and participating as appropriate.)

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Appendix 5

ARTS SECTOR SELBY/VIGER CAMPUS

The Selby/Viger Arts Sector offers programs in the Social Sciences, Languages and Literature, and the Creative Arts leading to a pre-university diploma.
The following disciplines are offered by the Selby/Viger Arts Sector: Anthropology, Economics, English, French, Geography, History, Humanities, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, and Sociology. Communications/Cinema and Visual Fine Arts courses are offered at Viger. Drama and Music are offered at Richelieu. Special interdisciplinary programs designed to integrate related courses around a central theme, such as Canadian Studies and Quebec Studies are also offered.
Students are encouraged to sample a wide range of subjects: they are given an opportunity to explore before specializing so that they may make informed decisions about their academic future.
The Selby/Viger Arts Sector attempts not only to impart to students knowledge of specific disciplines, but also to teach students to think logically, to read with understanding, and to write clearly.
The individual needs of students are emphasized. Academic Advisers, counsellors, the staff of the Learning Centre and the Preparatory Arts program, as well as the teachers themselves, are available to help students with personal and academic problems.
Self-expression and participation are actively encouraged not only in the classroom, but also in departmental and sector affairs.
Students are invited to voice their opinions and share in the responsibility of controlling their academic environment.

Special Arts Programs

ISRAEL STUDIES

Israel is a major center of worldwide religious, cultural and political interest. This "study" is designed to give concerned students a valuable first-hand experience of day-to-day life in Israel, and to round out a study of its social and economic structures, its culture and folklore, its philosophy and politics, and its history and archaeology.
The program is structured as follows:
A) A summer program of six to seven weeks duration beginning in May, for three credits (Hebrew, History and Humanities). Outline: orientation, travel to Israel, four weeks of Hebrew classes and work at a kibbutz, seven days of seminars and field work in Jerusalem, field trip from north to south, archaeological and historical sites.
B) A semestrial program (up to six credits). Students will stay, work, and study on a kibbutz. Courses will be conducted in English in the following fields: Hebrew (2 credits), Sociology, English Literature, Political Science, and History.
A seven day seminar in Jerusalem and field trips all over Israel are integrated in the program.

PREPARATORY ARTS

Preparatory Arts is a one year course of studies within the Social Sciences program for students who can benefit from an intensive study of English during their first two semesters at Dawson. Students in Creative Arts or Languages and Literature may also be accepted. Small English classes and individual attention ensure maximum opportunity for each student to discover his or her potential.
The Preparatory Arts course of studies focusses on the general development and well-being of the individual as well as on academic excellence. In order to develop the reading, writing, and thinking skills essential for all college courses, students take a two-semester double credit course in English and Learning Centre Studies. They are free to choose two to four additional courses from the mainstream Social Science offerings. All credits earned can be applied to a Cegep diploma.
By the end of the year, a successful student will have earned three CORE English credits and one option English credit, two Humanities credits, and between two and six credits in other courses.
The Preparatory Arts course of studies is open primarily to English native speakers.

REFLECTIONS

Reflections is a unique program at Dawson in which approximately sixty students and four teachers work together on a concentrated course of study in English, Humanities, Philosophy and Psychology. Because Reflections provides all the advantages of small group study, there is ample opportunity for student-teacher interaction.
The core of the Reflections program is the seminar. Covering a wide range of topics, five in-depth seminars which are interdisciplinary and interrelated are offered each term. In consultation with the faculty, students select the combination of seminars they wish to undertake. Four of the seminars are led by an individual professor while the fifth is taught by the entire Reflections staff. In addition to the seminar, other methods of study are possible, such as: pursuing guided independent study in an area of special interest, working on individual or small group projects of various kinds (writing essays, monographs, journals, producing films, audio or video tapes, photographic essays, staging dramatic or other performances for a group), participation in community service activities.

Requirements

Reflections is available to a student in any academic field once he or she has been admitted to Dawson. Although students are encouraged to follow the program for two or more terms, there is no obligation to remain in the program after one term.
Students enrolled in Reflections must take a minimum of four credits in the program each term. Credits are available in English (core and option), Humanities (all four core categories), Psychology and Philosophy.
The faculty reserves the right to refuse re-entry to any student, who, after one term in the program, seems unsuitable. Enrollment in the program takes place at the Reflections table at fall or winter Registration. To reserve a place or for more information call Marie Crossen at 931-8731, ext. 8027.

The seminars

English
Professor: John Lucas
During the fall term, two topics are explored

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PHILOSOPHY

340-217-78
Philosophy and Knowledge
The purpose of this course is to study the evolution of ideas about knowledge and truth in the European and Anglo-American philosophical traditions. The relation between these ideas and science and the humanities will also be explored. The course takes students from the time of the Greek Philosophers until today. 3 hrs. per week.

340-901-78
Logic and Philosophy
The objective of this course is to introduce students to the theory of logical inference by providing them with a working knowledge of the propositional and predicate calculi.

The course consists of the study of argument, it examines the determining conditions for the validity of an argument, it develops techniques for proving an argument valid. In particular, the course contains a study of model theory and proof theory for both the logic of truth functions and the logic of quantifiers. 3 hrs. per week.

340-225-78
Introduction to Social Philosophy
This course examines the nature of society and social conduct with particular attention to the questions of the relationships between the individual and society, the existence of social obligations, and the relationships between those obligations and individual choice. We concentrate on that branch of social philosophy called political philosophy. Among topics which may be discussed: justice, liberty, the relationship between ethics and politics. Among philosophers who may be discussed: Plato, Hobbes, and Locke. 3 hrs. per week.

The New School 030.07

The New School was started in 1973 as an experiment. By now, it is an established and thriving community dedicated to an alternative approach to education. A regular Cegep-level credit load, leading toward a D.E.C. (Diplôme d'études collegiales) in Languages and Literature, Creative Arts or Social Science is offered. The difference between the New School's teaching methods and others is that here the curriculum focus is personal as well as academic.

Together with staff and other students, each person contributes to the design of their courses. They are responsible for finding a methodology, course focus and structure that is acceptable. It is in this way that subject matter becomes a reflection of the particular curiosities and learning needs of individual students. The structures of the school are set up to encourage students to develop a creative and responsible attitude towards their education. This includes developing academic, personal, and group skills which will be useful in the present and in the future.

Students work with many teachers. They explore the multiple resources in the school, the college at large, and in the external community. Academic areas in the school include: anthropology, cinema, ceramics, dance, fine arts, humanities, literature, music, philosophy, photography, sociology, french, psychology, religion, theatre and women's studies. Students wishing to take disciplines not available at the New School may take one or two courses per semester at another campus with permission from their curriculum adviser.

Each student in The New School belongs to a Band. A Band is a group of approximately fifteen students and one teacher who choose to work together for a term. The essential function of the Band is to be a cohesive group where students focus on the development of greater self-awareness and better communication with others. This self-examination involves exploring issues that are relevant to the individual's personal growth. Such issues include communicating effectively with other people and/or learning how decisions are best made in a group. It also helps students decide about their priorities in their present and future lives. Bands meet twice a week for at least two hours each session.

The school depends upon a high level of involvement from all its members. According to its principles of self-governance, students and teachers together take responsibility for making decisions. Thus everyone is given an opportunity to learn about the dynamics of community growth, change and stability.

The New School is located on two floors of Dawson's Victoria Campus (near the Square Victoria metro station). In addition to the classrooms and offices there is a theatre, an art studio, a darkroom, a ceramics/crafts studio, music practice rooms, a library, a kitchen and several lounge areas. Students have complete access to all facilities (ie. athletics, libraries etc.) on other Dawson campuses.

Entrance requirements include a Secondary V Certificate (or equivalent) or mature student status. An interview is also required.

For further information, please contact the New School Admissions Coordinator at 931-8731, ext. 6070. Correspondance can be addressed to The New School, Dawson College, 485 McGill Street, Montreal, Quebec H2Y 2H4.

Access (Career Plus) 030.08

A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR ADULTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL

LaFontaine Campus

The Access Program, which begins its 7th year in September, 1985, is a one-year (two semester) course of study designed for students who have been out of school for several years and who want to return. For those who want to explore the possibilities of furthur study and/or work and who feel unsure of their ability to cope with the demands of formal study, the program helps review or acquire the basic skills needed to succeed in academic work.

Who is eligible?

The program is open to men and women of all ages, though the majority of students are between 30 and 50 years of age. A High School Leaving Certificate is desirable but not mandatory.

Information sessions are held twice a year, in June and in August, during which the program personnel help prospective students decide whether the program is appropriate for their needs.

What does the program consist of?

There are two parts to the program: (a) the academic courses, and (b) the Services Labs.

(a) Four courses
Students follow three courses in classes with other mature students, these courses are English, Mathematics, and Humanities. They also choose a fourth course from among the regular college courses, for example, French, Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, Religion. The fourth course allows the student to begin to adjust to regular college classes. All four courses are credit courses and are taught by faculty particularly interested in working with mature students.

The English course (Effective Reading and Writing) concentrates on (1) reading and comprehension of short articles, stories, and essays; and (2) writing clear sentences, paragraphs, and essays.

Basic Mathematics focuses on arithmetical calculations: decimals, percentage, fraction, etc.

Humanities courses are, like English, required for all Cegep students; they explore questions of values and beliefs in our society. Humanities courses are different each semester and have included: Communication, Quebec: Evolution/Revolution; The Adult Learner; Looking at Women; Freud and Modern Culture.

Courses for the program are scheduled on three days a week: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays beginning at 8:30 a.m. Each course has 3 to 4 hours of lectures per week (more if there are labs in Science or Languages). This means 12 hours in the classroom per week, and there is usually homework for each class (altogether probably 15-20 hours per week minimum).

(b) The services lab
(1 period per week), the program also consists of (1) group sessions with counsellors on such topics as Time

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